

HOW TO CARE FOR H1N1 AND SEASONAL INFLUENZA

All forms of influenza are an infection of the nose, throat and lungs caused by a virus. As with other viral illnesses, ***antibiotics do not work against an influenza virus***. Call your physician's office before coming in for treatment. See symptoms at bottom of the page, which suggest emergency room care.

EARLY SYMPTOMS USUALLY INCLUDE:

- Sudden fever of 100.4°F or higher;
- Cough;
- One or more of the following: sore throat, muscle aches, or physical exhaustion.
- Children may also feel sick to their stomach, vomit or have diarrhea.
- Elderly people and people with lowered immunity may not develop a fever.

ISOLATE

If you or a family member is sick, stay home and avoid contact with others for at least 5 days.

REST

REDUCE FEVER

- Dress in lightweight clothing and keep the room temperature around 68°F.
- Eat small, nutritious meals, even if not hungry. If nauseated, restrict to fluids, and maintain hydration as below.
- Take acetaminophen (such as Tylenol). Children older than six months and adults without kidney failure, hypertension, or heart disease may use Ibuprophen (Motrin) rather than acetaminophen.
- Do not take aspirin for fever reduction. Adults taking daily low dose aspirin for heart disease should not stop this routine.

HYDRATE

- Drink plenty of fluids. If the person who is sick has urine (pee) that is darker than usual, they need to drink more. If nauseated, fluids may be better tolerated as frequent, small amounts.

SEEK EMERGENCY CARE - CALL THE EMERGENCY ROOM FIRST - IF THESE SYMPTOMS EMERGE

- Shortness of breath while resting or doing very little
- Difficult or painful breathing
- Coughing up bloody sputum
- Increased wheezing
- Chest pain
- Fever for 3 or 4 days without improvement
- Feeling better, then suddenly having a high fever or becoming ill again
- Extreme drowsiness and difficulty awakening
- Disorientation or confusion
- Severe earache
- Sudden inability to function in a normally independent, elderly person
- Constant vomiting or diarrhea, especially in an elderly person or young child